

Natural News

Weekly Staff Newsletter
January 21, 2000



Anthropology storage renovations completed!



See story
on page 2

CLEANUP WEEK 3.0

Furniture Swap update

Watch next week's *Natural News* for lists of furniture and other items available in the Cleanup Week 3.0 Furniture Swap.

If you have not already sent Lou French a list of items from your department it's not too late to participate. Simply e-mail your list to lfrench@fmnh.org.

Thanks to all who have made Cleanup Week 3.0 a success.

FIELD NOTES

Week of January 24

Staff/Volunteer Events

Aerobics Class

- Tuesday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor East
- Thursday, 5 p.m., Ground Floor East

Green Sheet Meeting

- Wednesday, 3 p.m., Special Events

Public Events/Campus Events

Cultural Collections Committee event with Gary Feinman, new Chair of the Anthropology Department

- Monday, 5:30 p.m.

Lecture: Jimmy Santiago Baca

- Tuesday, 6:30 p.m. in JST

The **Natural News** is published every Friday and edited by department. Send stories, artwork, ideas to patience@fmnh.org or call ext. 7286. The deadline for each week's issue is Wednesday at noon.

ACADEMIC AFFAIRS

Anthropology storage upgrades completed

We're finished!

During the last two years the anthropology department has been improving the storage conditions for accessibility to its Meso-, Central, and South American archaeological and ethnological collections.

The project began in December of 1997 with the deinstallation of Hall 9 in order to make room for the Museum Store. Approximately 2,500 artifacts were removed from exhibit (thanks go to the Exhibits staff) and then re-integrated into the collection. In the following years, a whopping 20,400 archaeological and 7,400 ethnological specimens were re-organized and re-housed using archival storage materials and proper conservation methods.

A good example of this reorganization and rehousing effort is the South American ethnological collection, which includes thousands of feather items, such as headdresses, necklaces and ornaments from Brazil and Paraguay. In order to prevent deterioration and provide pest control, more than twenty airtight cabinets were installed to properly store this delicate featherwork and their special mounts. Another example of our broad and creative abilities included the construction of two metal frame textile racks to hold rolled and hanging textiles, which helped to consolidate the entire collection and greatly improved accessibility.

"Show-shelves" along the access aisles in these storage rooms highlight individual specimens and have improved the overall appearance of Central Anthropology Storage. So far, various researchers from around the world have given great reviews on the ease of use and accessibility of these particular collections.

This excellent work depended on a revolving team of four collections management assistants. Without the dedication of Jamie Gont, Chris Philipp, Jennifer Benedict, Susan Lerner, Barb Burkhardt, Elisa Aguilar, Jon Rogers and Steven LaPointe (plus various interns and volunteers), the project could not have been completed. We also would like to thank the entire Conservation staff (Cap Sease, Holly Lundberg, Bronwyn Eves, Ruth Andris, Christine Sinno, and Joel Thompson), as well as Wil Grewe-Mullins and Janice Klein for their invaluable assistance throughout. In a similar project, collections management staff are currently de-installing Hall 4 to make space for SUE and preparing to improve other areas of the collection.

A special note: At the beginning of this project, anthropology staff began using the File-Maker Pro database to accurately record information and track storage locations. This not only facilitated the movement of the collection but also increased the collection's accessibility and research value, and we wanted to give thanks to the Computing Department, especially Tim Krauskopf, for working with us on a daily basis to customize our FileMaker Pro applications.

Submitted by Elisa Aguilar

More great news from Anthropology

Stephen Nash, head of collections in Anthropology, is pleased to announce that the University of Utah Press has just released his edited volume entitled *It's About Time: A History of Archaeological Dating in North America*.

In a review of the volume, Dr. Richard Woodbury of Harvard University wrote: "This is a first, an up-to-date survey of all the major archaeological dating techniques, rich with historical narratives, personalities, and technical details. The authors provide much that is new and unfamiliar and also evaluate the ways these techniques have benefited archaeology by moving it from its timeless earlier days to chronologically precise records of the past. Particularly valuable are the accounts of less familiar techniques, such as archeomagnetism, obsidian hydration, and luminescence. It is an impressive, well assembled, and important volume. I have enjoyed reading it."

Dr. Raymond H. Thompson of the University of Arizona added: "This valuable collection of essays is the most complete treatment available of the scientific, historical, intellectual, and sociological aspects of dating the archaeological record."

The Field Museum Presents



African Heritage
Festival 2000: Talking Roots

Voices from the Field
Keynote Lecture Series
An Evening with

Wole Soyinka

Introduction by
Haki R. Madhubuti

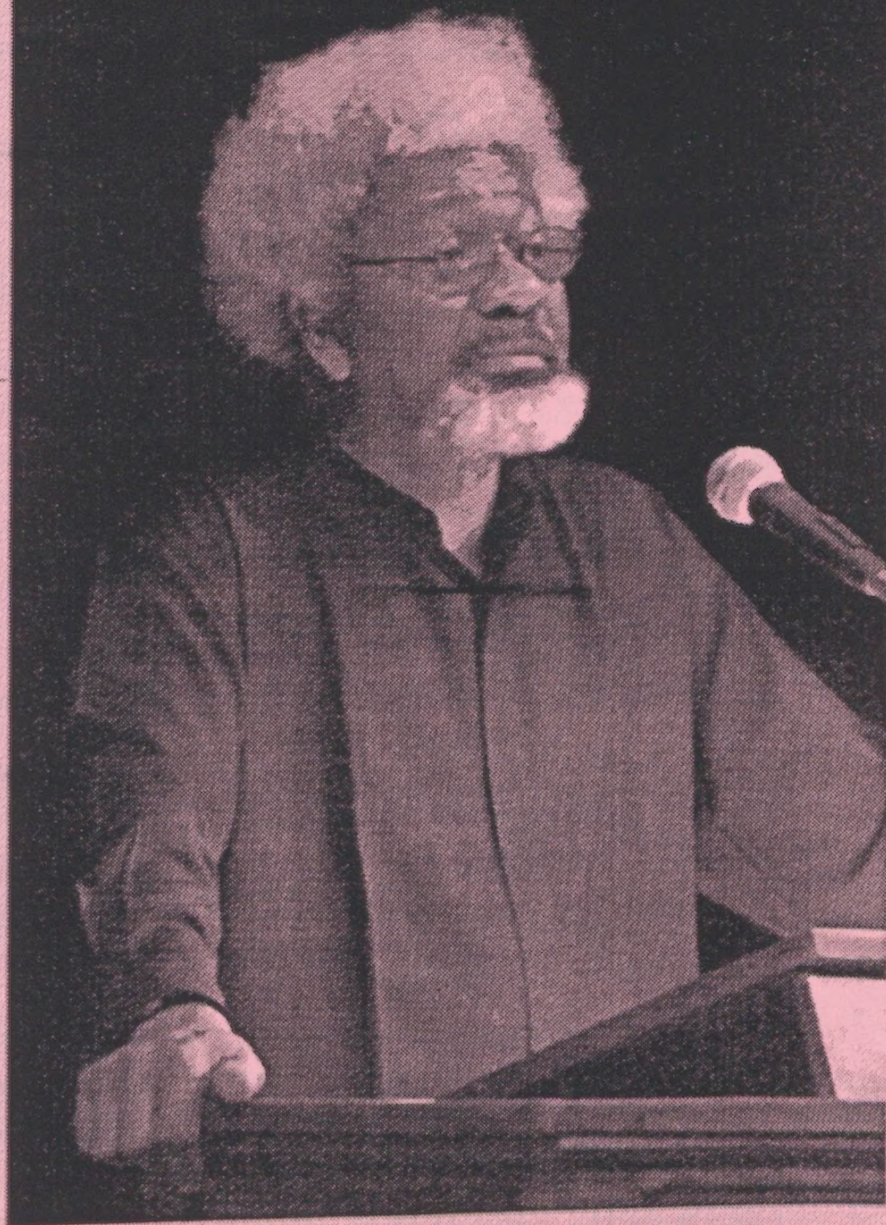
Wole Soyinka, the first Nigerian and African to win the Nobel Prize in Literature, has been called "an outspoken, daring public figure deeply engaged in the main political issues of his country and Africa..." In 1967, Soyinka appealed for a cease-fire to the civil war that was ravaging his country and, as a result, was arrested, accused of conspiring with the rebels and held as a political prisoner for two years. He is the author of critically acclaimed plays and essay collections, including *A Dance of the Forests*, *Myth Literature and the African World* and *The Burden of Memory, The Muse of Forgiveness*. In addition to his work in the arts, Soyinka has become a symbol for human rights throughout the world and has been cited for excellence by Amnesty International. Soyinka is currently the Robert W. Woodruff Professor of the Arts at Emory University in Atlanta. He will discuss "The Writer and Politician - The End of an African Honeymoon."

Additional Lectures in The Voices from the Field Series

Anna Quindlen	February, 29; 6:00 p.m.
Elaine Pagels & Michael Eric Dyson	April 13; 6:30 p.m.
Julie Taymor	May 4; 6:30 p.m.

The Field Museum salutes the people of Chicago for their long-standing, generous support of the Museum through the Chicago Park District.

This program is partially supported with funds from the Illinois Arts Council, a state agency.



Thursday
February 3, 2000
6:30 p.m.

\$20 general, \$15 members,
\$18 students and educators

Please call (312) 665-7400 for tickets
or more information about the
African Heritage Festival.

The Field
Museum

The Field Museum Presents



African Heritage
Festival 2000: Talking Roots

Talking Roots:

A Poetry Happening at The Field



Quraysh
Ali Lansana

Poet Regie Gibson and some of Chicago's finest jazz musicians blend the spoken word with music. Festivities include the celebration of Quraysh Ali Lansana's new collection of poems entitled *southside rain*. Open mic!

Saturday

February 5, 2000

7:30 p.m.

\$7 general; \$5 members;
open mic readers: \$3

For more information call:
(312) 665-7400



Regie Gibson

Talking Roots Festival

Experience Africa's Talking Roots through music, dance, scientific research, activities, and oral traditions. See the astounding artistry and stilt walking athleticism of S.P.I.R.I.T.S. Listen to the Kuntu Drama Players as they use folklore, music and poetry to inspire universal messages. Award-winning poet Michael Warr presents a multimedia show, entitled *Poetic Aperture – An African-American Interprets Africa*. Visit the special painting exhibition *Africa: From Eritrea with Love*.

African Heritage Festival is made possible through the generosity of Abbott Laboratories. Performances by In the Spirits are made possible through the generosity of Scott Foresman and Prentice Hall, educational publishers. The Field Museum is pleased to collaborate with the Guild Complex for African Heritage Festival 2000.

February 5 and 6
11 a.m. - 4 p.m.

February 7 and 8
10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Festival free with museum admission

The **Field**
Museum

It's About Time concludes a project corollary to Steve's dissertation research on the history of tree-ring dating, which was previously published as *Time, Trees, and Prehistory: Tree-Ring Dating and the Development of North American Archaeology, 1914-1950* (University of Utah Press, 1999).

The "Darwin Quiz" is now on the Internet

Many students know that evolution is somehow about change, but they may not have a clear sense of *when* and *how* it is important to "think like an evolutionist." John Terrell (Anthropology) and his colleague at the New York State Museum, Dr. John Hart, are trying to design a short "quiz" to be included in their forthcoming book *Darwin and Archaeology: A Handbook of Key Concepts* (Greenwood Press). They hope the quiz will help readers discover if they see human diversity and our history on earth from a commonsense perspective or an evolutionist's point of view.

A beta test version of "The Darwin Quiz" is now available on the Internet at <http://www.bioanth.com/darwinquiz.htm> thanks to Dr. Kevin M. Kelly of the University of Iowa. Try it out. But be careful! Don't forget this is *not a true-or-false test*. Each question may have *several good answers*. Think of it as a quiz like one of those little questionnaires in popular magazines on "How Compatible Are You and Your Sweetheart?"

Chris Brochu featured at Atlanta symposium

Geology Department post-doctoral scientist Chris Brochu (currently working on the definitive monograph of SUE the *T. rex*) gave a talk on January 6 at the SICB (Society for Integrative and Comparative Biology) symposium in Atlanta entitled "Beyond Reconstruction: Using Phylogenies to Test Hypotheses about Vertebrate Evolution."

Chris's talk, entitled "The importance of phylogeny in interpreting the crocodylian fossil record," focused on how the application of evolutionary principles to taxonomy can make a substantial difference with regard to the interpretation of broad patterns in the fossil record.

NEWS YOU CAN USE

Educational Assistance Committee to meet

The Educational Assistance Committee will hold its quarterly meeting on Tuesday February 8. Staff members who have not submitted proof of completion for courses taken in 1999 are strongly urged to do so immediately. The committee will also begin to review applications for 2000 at this time. Please submit your materials by Friday, February 4 to Maria Burns in Human Resources, ext. 7274.

Submitted by Randy Strickland, Committee Chair

Corrections to phone list

The latest edition of the Departmental Staff Directory misprinted the extension for Rob McMillan, ECP's administrative assistant and departmental contact. Rob's extension is 7434.

In addition, the correct extension for Kalli Hilbrenner, Women's Board Coordinator, is 7130.

Harris Loan program goes national!

Harris loan boxes have been appreciated by teachers and students throughout the Chicago area for many years. Now they are also proudly displayed in Washington D.C. and in the district office of Speaker of the House Dennis Hastert. Hastert, who is from the Fox Valley, has a beautifully mounted Illinois red fox in his Batavia office as well as an older "fox in a box" in his Washington D.C. office.

Senator Dick Durbin picked a diorama of prairie daisies for his office in Washington. We are happy to have made these loans to such prominent public officials and expect they will be appreciated by the many visitors to their offices.

THE FIELD ASSOCIATES PROUDLY PRESENT

*Hidden in the Hall
Masquerade Ball*

All staff and volunteers invited at a discounted ticket price!

This year, the Field Associates' annual winter fundraiser is inspired by The Field Museum's upcoming temporary exhibit, *Masks: Faces of Culture*. We hope you will join us!

Come dance to *The Stu Hirsh Orchestra*.

Enjoy the traveling antics of *Lookingglass Theatre Company*.

Cocktails and hors d'oeuvres will be served.

Black-tie and mask required (masks will be available at the door).

Unmasking at midnight!

Friday, February 11, 2000

7:00 p.m. to 1:00 a.m.

Stanley Field Hall

Tickets: \$55 - Special Staff/Volunteer Ticket Price

\$100 - Two tickets

**Tickets are limited to one staff ticket plus one guest.*

Please call the event hotline at extension 7227 or stop by the Women's Board office to reserve your tickets before Wednesday, February 9.

Submitted by: Amanda Geppert